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SUBJECT: KARBAL HUMAN RIGHTS ORGINIZATION MEETS PRT KARBALA RULE OF LAW COORDINATOR

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[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Karbala Reporting Cable.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Summary: On Thursday, March 13, 2008, Karbala PRT Rule of Law (ROL) Coordinator, met with Mr. Ahmed Sadiq Al-Mosewy (Karbala Human Rights Organization Coordinator/Justice Network for Iraq Prisoners), Mr. Nabeel Mohammed Hassan (Deputy Chief of Karbala Human Rights Organization), and Mr. Falah Abud Al Hassan (Member of Karbala Human Rights Organization) The meeting was requested by ROL Coordinator Mathias Onderak and REO Locally Engaged Staff (LES) Kamel El Hassani to make contact with the Karbala Human Rights Organization ("KHRO") to discuss the current KHRO projects and the status of Karbala detainees and prisoners. A wide range of issues was discussed and including the pending move of the PRT to Karbala province. End Summary.

[1](#)3. (SBU) KHRO expressed concern that some projects they had hoped to work on with the PRT were being delayed or neglected. ROL Coordinator explained to KHRO that the PRT has been undermanned and that the USG was ramping up a fully staffed PRT for deployment specifically for Karbala Province. PRT Karbala plans to be much more engaged in the province and specifically the ROL Coordinator is tasked with working on Karbala Province Rule of Law issues. KHRO and Rule of Law Coordinator agreed that a PRT and Rule of Law Coordinator dedicated only to Karbala issues will be beneficial to confronting human rights abuses in the province.

[1](#)4. (SBU) KHRO was encouraged that several Karbala judges have received laptop computers and computer training. KHRO indicated that more than one month prior they asked the PRT to review a QRF request regarding advanced computer training for judges and computer training for legal support staff. KHRO wondered why they had not heard about the request. ROL Coordinator assured KHRO that the proposed training programs and QRF request would be evaluated by the ROL Coordinator. ROL Coordinator made clear there were no guarantees about fund appropriation for the program but that the requests would be taken seriously, reviewed, and an update on the status would be timely provided to KHRO.

[1](#)5. (SBU) KHRO explained that the correctional centers in Karbala are terribly overcrowded and disease infested. KHRO stated a similar environment exists in the Al Hillah prison where Karbala Province felony convicts are housed. KHRO also noted that recently they asked the PRT for assistance and help on a proposal to provide dental and health care to the prisoners and receive QRF funds for this purpose. Rule of Law Coordinator advised this plan and proposals would be timely reviewed along with the advanced computer training proposal.

¶6. (SBU) Rule of Law Coordinator asked KHRO for documents on the number of Karbala Province correctional facilities (adult, women, and juvenile) and the number of prisoners currently housed in these facilities. KHRO noted they have done much research on this issue and agreed to supply this information with the caveat that some of the evaluations are six months old.

¶7. (SBU) Rule of Law Coordinator asked KHRO what the effect of the newly enacted amnesty law had on Karbala correctional facilities. KHRO stated that they believe as many as 1/3 of all Karbala prisoners would be released because of the Amnesty Law (it was explained that this figure includes woman and juveniles). KHRO did express concern that the Karbala Province prisoners currently housed in Al Hillah will not have access to lawyers or be able to file the appropriate documents for release. Rule of Law Coordinator assured KHRO that the amnesty law and its' implementation will be discussed shortly when the Rule of Law Coordinator meets with Karbala Chief Justice Abdul Nour. KHRO stated that they have found Judge Adbul Nour easy to work with.

¶8. (SBU) KHRO commented that they often deal with the very "dangerous" work of combating public administrative corruption and asked if this will also be addressed by the new Karbala PRT. Rule of Law Coordinator indicated that the Karbala PRT is also concerned about public administrative corruption and has a governance specialist working in the PRT. KHRO stated that they hope to work closely with all aspects of the Karbala PRT that work on human rights issues and thanked the Karbala PRT and the Rule of Law Coordinator for their service.

¶9. (SBU) Comment: KHRO was very pleased to hear that a ROL coordinator was assigned to the PRT. They look forward to working the many issues that face them and the PRT over the coming months and years. KHRO can serve a good purpose by being the eyes and ears for the PRT for Human rights and prisoner issues. ROL Coordinator surmises there is much work to be done and is looking forward to the challenge. Karbala has been

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neglected for a period of time and KHRO was pleased to learn that the USG was re-engaging in the province on all levels and is looking forward to working with us in the short and long term. End Comment
COOKE